

*Washington, DC* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has awarded nine area schools and libraries with a set of seventeen classic books about American life. The book awards are part of NEH's We the People Bookshelf program, which is a literary complement to the NEH's Picturing America program -- a free initiative that helps teach American history and culture by bringing some of the country's great art directly to classrooms and libraries.

"I am very pleased that nine of our area schools and libraries will be receiving a set of seventeen classic hardcover books that paint unique pictures of American life," said Hinchey, who serves on House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, which funds the NEH. "This program provides a wonderful opportunity to engage students in the study of American history, art, and politics. I encourage all school districts and libraries in New York to apply to this enlightening program in future years."

In the congressional district Hinchey represents, nine institutions will be awarded We the People Bookshelf awards: Rondout Valley Middle School in Accord; East Middle School Library, Horace Mann Elementary School, and MacArthur Elementary School Library in Binghamton; Gardiner Library; Livingston Manor Free Library; Middletown Thrall Library; Roscoe Central Elementary School Library; and Roscoe Central High School Library.

The school and libraries will receive seventeen hardcover books related to this year's "Picturing America" theme, inspired by the premise that a nation's literature, as well as its visual art, can be a window into its history, aspirations, and ideals. Among the books being sent to the schools and libraries are: *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez* by Kathleen Krull; *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow; *Sweet Music in Harlem* by Debbie Taylor; *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain; *Restless Spirit: The Life and Work of Dorothea Lange* by Elizabeth Partridge; *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville. The Bookshelf includes Spanish translations to accompany three of the selected titles. As part of their award, libraries agree to hold public programming for students, such as reading competitions, essay contests, guest speakers, and other community-enriching activities.

The National Endowment for the Humanities is an independent grant-making agency of the United States government dedicated to supporting research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities. The study of the humanities — history, literature, philosophy, and the arts — helps us explore what it means to be human. The humanities enable us to understand the world and our place in it.

